



News Release

WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wisconsin selected to get new Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team

Governor Jim Doyle announced today that Wisconsin has been selected by the Department of Defense to receive one of 12 new National Guard Civil Support Teams (CSTs). The teams are designed to deploy rapidly to assist local first responders in determining the nature of a weapons of mass destruction incident, provide medical and technical advice, and pave the way for the identification and arrival of follow-on state and federal response assets.

“Our Wisconsin National Guard members make important contributions to our national defense,” Governor Doyle said. “This new unit will strengthen Wisconsin’s ability to effectively respond in the event of a terrorist incident.”

Each team consists of 22 highly skilled, full-time members of the Army and Air National Guard who are federally resourced, trained and evaluated, but fall under the command and control of the state governors. The initiative is part of Defense Department efforts to support local, state, and federal civil authorities in the event of an incident involving weapons of mass destruction in the United States. Currently, there are 32 certified teams.

Wisconsin established a part-time Civil Support Team several years ago. The 54th Civil Support Team is based in Madison with 22 part-time National Guard members. Although the 54th CST’s members all had received significant specialized training, the unit lacked the sophisticated detection and communication equipment required to be fully effective. The new team will be fully equipped with state-of-the-art gear. Conversion from 22 part-time Guard members to 22 fulltime, active duty soldiers and airmen will also make the new team more capable of a quick and effective response to any weapon of mass destruction incident or terrorist attack in Wisconsin.

Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening, commander of the Wisconsin National Guard, credits strong support from Gov. Doyle and the state’s congressional delegation for Wisconsin’s selection this afternoon.

“Governor Doyle and our representatives in Congress have been actively advocating for a CST in Wisconsin for several years,” Wilkening said. “Now more than ever, every state needs one of these teams, and Wisconsin may have waited several more years without the strong support from our governor and elected officials in Washington. Wisconsin will be a safer place because of their efforts.”

The decision on which states would receive the first 12 new teams was based on Defense Threat Reduction Agency analysis of criteria such as population density, port and coastal security challenges, location of Department of Defense installations, protection of critical infrastructure, and the presence of symbolic sites of national significance.

Congress directed the establishment of 23 additional Civil Support Teams in the National Defense Authorization Act for 2003, and funded the establishment of the first 12 of them in the 2004 Defense Appropriations Act.

In addition to Wisconsin, other states selected to receive new CSTs are Connecticut, New Jersey, North Carolina, Indiana, Maryland, Oregon, Mississippi, Utah, Nevada, Nebraska, and Rhode Island. Decisions on exact locations for these units will be made at the state, territory, and district level.